

STATEMENT OF  
DAVID A. CRANE, Planning Administrator  
BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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INTRODUCTION

My name is David A. Crane and I am Planning Administrator for the Boston Redevelopment Authority. I serve as the chief professional city planner for the City of Boston and have responsibility for directing the comprehensive city-wide planning work of the Authority. My purpose here is to report on whether the proposed Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan conforms to the master plan of the City now in effect.

The current official master plan of the City of Boston is the 1965-1975 General Plan of the City of Boston, March 1965. This Plan was first adopted by the Boston Redevelopment Authority in preliminary form on December 17, 1964 and after wide public distribution, reviews, and appropriate revisions, was adopted in final form by the Authority on March 11, 1965.

The 1965-1975 General Plan of the City of Boston, March 1965 is a result of four years of work begun in 1961 consisting of research, planning, and design studies, performed by the Redevelopment Authority

staff in its planning board capacity, and based in part on earlier background work of the old Boston Planning Board.

CONFORMITY OF THE CHARLESTOWN URBAN RENEWAL  
PLAN WITH THE 1965-1975 GENERAL PLAN

Since the inception of the Authority's work with the Charlestown community, there has been a continuous process of integration between the long-range, city-wide planning work of the Authority and the preparation of the Urban Renewal Plan for Charlestown. As a result there is, in my opinion, a very close degree of conformity between the Urban Renewal Plan and the 1965-1975 General Plan.

The provisions of the Urban Renewal Plan are consistent with the 1965-1975 General Plan provisions for physical patterns and development priorities for land use, transportation, public facilities, housing, semi-public institutions, commerce, and industry, although a long-range master plan is necessarily of a more general character.

The long range interests of the City as a whole and of every taxpayer, even the interests of the entire Greater Boston Area, are very seriously at stake in this hearing and the subsequent decisions that must be taken. The question of whether this residential community is to receive urban renewal assistance instead of being left to further population decline, growth of incompatible land uses, increase of traffic, and general deterioration of physical and economic assets is one that could profoundly affect Boston's economy and social strength,

and it has been weighed very carefully in the 1965-1975 General Plan.

The economic future of the City and of Greater Boston is becoming increasingly tied to more advanced technology and industries. Boston has been referred to as the "City of Ideas". In relation to this economic change now underway, there is a general need and demand on the part of the residents of the City for more attractive housing, outstanding local public facilities and services, more educational and recreational opportunities, and overall improvement in the variety of choices available to all age and income groups. If these improvements are not provided in residential areas close to the center of Boston, the City will not share in the population and economic growth that Greater Boston is experiencing.

If the City's comparative economic strength and balance of population composition is allowed to deteriorate further, the invaluable residential and public assets existing in Charlestown today may well be replaced very shortly by less desirable land uses.

The most important finding of the 1965-1975 General Plan is that residential rehabilitation through urban renewal of Charlestown and other older areas adjacent to or in the regional core is absolutely essential to the City's economic position in this period of great metropolitan change. This is a central premise underlying the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan.

In my opinion, the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan conforms to the general plan for Boston in every respect and as required by law. I therefore recommend that you approve the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan.